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The Living Wage of Women Workers, A Study of Incomes and Expenditures of Four Hundred and Fifty Women Workers in the City of Boston. By LOUISE MARION BOSWORTH. Edited with an Introduction by F. SPENCER BALDWIN. Prepared under the direction of the Department of Research, Women's Educational and Industrial Union, Boston. Supplement to the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, May, 1911. Pp. vi+90.

The value of an inquiry of this kind depends upon the method of securing data and the number of persons from whom full and reliable information is collected. More than one investigation into working peoples' budgets is open to serious objection on the ground of unreliability of the schedules filled out by those whose income and expenditure it is desired to analyze. This difficulty has apparently been fully faced by Miss Bosworth and her advisers. After the not unnaturally speedy failure of a plan to have lodging-house landladies fill out schedules, the failure of a second plan to have working girls themselves fill out schedules, and the practical failure of a plan to have about one hundred girls keep accurate account-books, the information upon which the study was finally made was obtained by personal interviews with, and the preparation of detailed schedules for, about four hundred and seventy women. Aside from thirty account-books available, the information is thus based largely upon the memory of the girls themselves concerning their income and expenditure. While this leaves much to be desired, it is probably the best that can be done. Whether on the other hand, four hundred and fifty is a large enough number of cases upon which to base analyses by wage groups and by occupation, and thus to arrive at conclusions concerning "the living wage of women wage workers," may well be doubted. Very likely it is not. Anyone who has tried gathering such information, however, will realize the very great difficulties in the way of getting it, or even of getting access to those persons who may, *possibly*, be able and willing to give it. This but emphasizes the fact that such an investigation, to be in any way conclusive, should have behind it the financial backing and the planned co-operation of a number of agencies, employing a number of skilled field workers. The study at hand, while extremely suggestive and valuable, should, therefore, be taken as tentative and as pointing the way to a more thorough covering of the ground, with larger resources.

Miss Bosworth analyzes in a painstaking way the expenditures for

food, rent, clothing, health, savings and debts, and recreation and education, in as many chapters. Some extremely interesting facts are brought out, and always the facts cast luminous sidelights on the struggle to live. There are no hysterics, however, either on the part of the investigator or of the investigated. An interesting chapter is devoted to "Homes and Lodgings," and one to "Nominal v. Actual Incomes," in which it is brought out that the actual rate of wages is from 4 to 14 per cent less than nominal rate. The author concludes that the minimum living wage for women workers in Boston is between \$9 and \$11 a week. Her study will undoubtedly take immediate place among the authoritative inductive studies of the living wage; and it will be found interesting reading alike for the specialist and for the general reader interested simply in the drama of human struggle and matter-of-course fortitude.

OBERLIN COLLEGE

A. B. WOLFE

Half a Man. The Status of the Negro in New York. By MARY WHITE OVINGTON. New York: Longmans, Green & Co., 1911. Pp. ix+236.

In this study, Miss Ovington has given the results of careful and exhaustive use of sources of information about the Negro in New York, and of close, patient, sympathetic, and intelligent observation of the Negroes in New York. Such data as are supplied by the federal census, the Bureaus of Immigration, the New York Health Department, and other official agencies are organized and presented. In addition to seeking these sources, Miss Ovington has visited southern communities and lived in Negro neighborhoods in New York. For eight months she was the only white tenant in a Phipps tenement. The honesty with which Miss Ovington has made her observations is at the same time warmly tinged with sympathy and of a very rare quality; and her appreciation, frankness, and discrimination are most unusual. The result is that she arrives at a very unusual understanding of the difficulties under which the colored man, woman, and child, suffers by mere reason of the color. One of these difficulties is the fact that the person of color is always regarded as a member of a group, never as an individual, standing or falling by virtue of his own personal merits.

The reason for such a study is obvious and is suggested if not stated in the title. In the South the position of the Negro, as properly "behind